

Memo to Mr. Denger, chair, Village Board of Managers

Feb. 26, 2015

Re: Assistance to residents in the care of their trees

Over the past months the Tree Committee has had several discussions as to steps that might be taken by the Village to promote planting and care of trees on resident properties. The Committee welcomes the Board's action last May to make funds available to encourage residents to plant new canopy trees. It believes that action to help residents better maintain the trees they have is in the general interest of the Village as well.


One tangible step which might be taken is to make the Village Arborist available to answer questions which residents may have regarding their trees. Several of our neighboring jurisdictions already support Visiting Arborist programs and, up until about 10 years ago, the Village did as well, allowing residents to ask Bill Dunn, who then served as the Bartlett Tree contact with the Village, to visit residents who filed a request with the Village Manager. I am informed that such requests might have numbered in the range of 3-4 per month and that the scheduling was at the mutual convenience of Mr. Dunn and the resident and caused minimal burdens on Village staff.

This service was discontinued as a cost saving measure. The Committee believes it to be a service which would be helpful, appreciated by residents, and involve minimal costs. As was the practice in earlier years, we recommend that residents desiring Dr. Feather's advice be asked to complete a form identifying their questions and undertake to make themselves available (in person or by phone) at times when Dr. Feather may be in the Village for other business and able to visit their properties without making a special trip. We recommend that the form also stipulate that applicant waives any claims against the Village nor Dr. Feather as a result of his advice.

The Board may wish to assess a small fee in connection with such visits or may conclude that the costs of collecting and accounting for such fees does not warrant the charge. There were mixed views within the Committee as to this question, though a consensus that we would not wish the fee to be so large as to cause residents not to seek Dr. Feather's advice.

In general, the Committee would expect that Dr. Feather's visit to any property would not exceed 30 minutes, even including travel. An additional 15-30 minutes would likely be required were he to provide a written report. With a cost of roughly \$100/hour, the cost of the program even if no fee were to be assessed should not exceed \$5000 per year and could probably be absorbed within the fund allocation approved last year to support planting trees on private property.

Please let me know if there is anything further regarding this proposal which you might find useful.

Respectfully submitted,  Sam Lawrence, chair, Village Tree Committee